



News Release

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Department of Health awarded statewide permit to fight West Nile virus

OLYMPIA — The Washington State Department of Health has been granted a permit to help communities protect themselves from mosquito-borne disease, including West Nile virus. Local health departments and mosquito control districts are working to provide education to the public on prevention measures, surveillance of mosquito and bird populations for presence of the disease and, where necessary, control of mosquito populations that may carry the disease.

The Department of Health has been approved by the Washington State Department of Ecology for a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Waste Discharge General Permit, (NPDES) for aquatic mosquito control. The permit would allow the use of insecticides, primarily *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti), for mosquito control by applying larvicide directly to the surface waters of the state. Larvicides kill mosquito larvae before they mature.

The Department of Health undertook this responsibility to assist federal, state and local government by coordinating permit requirements with the state departments of Agriculture and Ecology, which have responsibility for pesticide regulation and protecting water quality.

This permit is available to mosquito control districts, local health departments, cities, counties, state and federal agencies, landowners and other entities qualified to use approved control measures. People should contact their local health department for information about prevention, protection and plans for their area. Information about mosquitoes, the permit, and the online application process is available on the Department of Health [West Nile virus Web site](http://www.doh.wa.gov/WNV) (www.doh.wa.gov/WNV). The state agency also has a toll-free information line on West Nile virus, 1-866-78VIRUS.

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Visit the Washington Department of Health Web site at <http://www.doh.wa.gov> for a healthy dose of information.